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### Chat with Rossini.

BY FERDINAND HILLER.

Translated for this Journal from the *Zeitung* of Cologne.

### XI.

In the summer of 1836 ROSSINI came to pass a week at Frankfort. FELIX MENDELSSOHN was there at the same time, and I had the pleasure of seeing these two men, the one of whom had written his last, the other his first great work, together almost daily in my father's house. The engaging manner of the celebrated maestro had its effect also upon Mendelssohn, and he played before him as much as he wanted, and what he wanted, both of his own and others' compositions. Rossini thought with great interest of those days, and often led the conversation back to the master snatched so early from us. He told us he had heard his Octet well performed in Florence, and I had to play to him the Symphony in A minor, for four hands, with a very clever pianiste from Paris, Madame PFEIFER, who was then in Trouville. With what fineness, what *esprit* Mendelssohn knew how to treat the smallest motive! said he after it was done. But how comes it, that he wrote no opera? Had he not applications for them from every theatre?

—You do not know our German theatrical management, dear maestro. We try the works of all times and nations, from GLUCK to BALFE, to VERDI, and let the living German composers make a trial when they can; to order an opera is a thing which seldom occurs to any theatre direction.

—But, exclaimed Rossini, if young talents are not encouraged, if you do not give them opportunity to get experience, nothing can ever come of it!

—And nothing will come of it, I answered.

A BEETHOVEN, a WEBER write for once a couple of masterpieces, but from a living and progressive German national opera we are as far now as ever. Moreover I believe that the German composers will always incline mainly toward instrumental music.

—They commonly begin with instrumental music, said Rossini, which perhaps makes it hard for them to accommodate themselves afterwards to the conditions of vocal music. They have difficulty in being simple, whereas it is hard to the Italians not to be even flat.

—You are very severe, maestro; indeed it may be the most difficult of problems to remain noble in simplicity. Speaking of that, I must come back again to my lament, that you did not continue after "William Tell" to write for the Grand Opera. Had you not the intention to compose a *Faust*?

—It was long a favorite thought of mine, and I had already sketched out a whole *scenario* with JOUY. Naturally upon the basis of GOETHE's poem. But about that time a real *Faust* mania sprang up in Paris; every theatre had its *a parte* *Faust*, which quite destroyed my relish for it. Meanwhile came the July revolution; the Grand Opera, formerly a royal institution, passed into the hands of a private impresario, my mother had died, my father found it intolerable to live in Paris, since he understood no French,—so I dissolved the contract, which pledged me to furnish four more grand operas, preferring to remain quietly at home and cheer the last years of my aged father. I was far away from my poor mother when she breathed her last; that had been an unspeakable grief to me, and I felt the greatest anxiety lest the same thing should happen to me with regard to my father.

—And so you went home to your Bologna, where I found you in '38, when you were signing cards of admission to a public rehearsal at the Lyceum. You took great interest in that institution at the time.

—I have done all that was in my power for it during my whole residence in Bologna down to the year '49. It was the school in which I got my education! And I had my fun also in having all sorts of works played to me by the pupils, who formed a complete orchestra. It often sounded, to be sure, like greens and turnips; still it was young and fresh and entertaining.

—You preferred Bologna to Florence for a residence? I asked.

—Bologna is my proper home, and an unconstrained and genial activity prevails there. Florence is more of a court city, and that is nothing to me, although I like to think of all the friendliness continually shown me by the Grand Duke.

—But it appears to me, you never found it very irksome, *illusterrissimo maestro*, to have intercourse with high and even supreme powers, and you have had opportunity enough for it. In fact you took part in the Congress of Vienna.

—I went there at the invitation of Prince METTERNICH, who wrote me a most amiable letter. Since I was *le Dieu de l'harmonie*, it ran, he hoped I would come there, where there was so much need of harmony. If *Cantatas* could have done the thing, I should have accomplished it. I had to compose for them at the shortest notice five pieces, for the *Negozianti*, and for the *Nobili*, for the festival of Concord—and what not?

—But how did you contrive to do all that?

—In part I patched old things together and put a new text under it—yet that too was a labor, with which I could scarcely get through in season. In a chorus about Concord it happened, that the word *Allianza* (Alliance) stood beneath a sorrowful chromatic sigh; I had no time to alter it, but I thought it fit to warn Prince Metternich beforehand of that mournful trick of accident.

—He recognized in it perhaps the work of a higher destiny, said I.

—At all events he submitted to it smilingly, proceeded the maestro. But the festival, which took place in the arena, was wonderfully beautiful, and is still vivid in my recollection. The only thing that plagued me there, was that I, to direct my *Cantata*, had to stand under an enormous statue of Concord, in constant terror lest it should fall upon my head.

—Concord would certainly have had a downfall then!

—*Merci!* But there were fabulous carryings on at that time in Verona. I was presented there among others to the emperor ALEXANDER. He and king GEORGE THE FOURTH of England were the most amiable crowned heads that I ever met. Of the personal attractiveness of the latter one can scarcely form an idea. But Alexander also was a splendid, really imposing man. I went from there to Venice, to write *Semiramide*. There again I found many of those high personages, and also Prince Metternich, who interested himself in an uncommon degree for music and really understood something of it. He was present every evening in the Fenice at the rehearsals of my new opera, and seemed to be very happy to be able to escape there somewhat from his political circles.

—*Apropos* of that story of the chromatic *Allianza*, said I, it occurs to me it used to be related how, during the occupation of the Church States by the Austrians, you received an order from the new governor of Bologna for a *Cantata*, and

you executed the commission in such a way, that you roguishly set the new text to a much sung patriotic song of your composing.

—There is not a word of truth in it. They left me quiet, and I really had no desire to joke with those stern gentlemen. I have never mixed myself up in any way in politics. I was a musician and it never occurred to me to wish to be anything else, although I take the liveliest interest in what is going on in the world, particularly in my country's fate. In truth I have lived through and seen all sorts of things.

[To be continued.]

Life of John Sebastian Bach;

WITH A CRITICAL VIEW OF HIS COMPOSITIONS, BY J. N. FORKE.

(Continued from p. 108)

CHAPTER X.

I have already noticed the careful manner in which Bach, all his life through, revised his works. I have had repeated opportunities of comparing together the various copies of the same work written in different years, and have felt both surprised and delighted at the diligence and ingenuity with which he contrived to make the indifferent good, and good better, and the better perfect. Nothing is more improving than such a comparison for the connoisseur, and the student eager in the prosecution of his art. It would be a very desirable object to add to the complete edition of Bach's works, a supplement containing the most important and instructive variations from his best works. And why should not this be done with the composer, the poet of tones, as well as with the poet in words.

In some of Bach's earlier works it not unfrequently happened that he repeated the same idea as it were in other words; as for instance, he perhaps repeated the same modulation in the same octave or in a lower one, or with a different turn of melody. In his maturer age he could not tolerate such meagreness; and wherever he found faults of this sort he never failed to discard them, no matter into how many hands the piece had passed, or however highly it was approved. Two most remarkable instances of this occur in the two preludes in C major, and C sharp major, in the first part of the "Well-tempered Clavichord," both of which are in this manner shortened by one half, while they are thus freed from all useless superfluities. In other pieces it sometimes occurred that Bach did too little; his idea was not fully expressed nor sufficiently carried out. I find a remarkable example of this in the prelude in D minor, in the second part of the "Well-tempered Clavichord." I possess several copies of this piece. In the oldest of them the first transposition of the theme into the bass is wanting, as well as several other passages which were necessary for the complete development of the thought. In the second copy this transposition of the theme into the bass is inserted whenever it occurs in the modes most nearly related to the original one. In the third several passages are more fully expressed, and more neatly connected together. Still there remained some turns and figures of the melody which did not agree with the style and spirit of the rest; and these inaccuracies are so carefully amended in a fourth copy as to render this prelude the most beautiful and perfect in the whole collection of the "Well-tempered Clavichord." Many persons preferred the piece in its original form, and thought it disapproved by these successive corrections. Bach, however, never suffered himself to be thus misled, but persevered in his corrections till it pleased him. At the beginning of the last century it was as much the fashion to overload instrumental music with running passages on single principal notes, as it has since been with vocal music, and Bach showed a passing conformity to this fashion, inasmuch as he wrote a few pieces in this style. One of these is the prelude in E minor, in the first part of the "Well-tempered Clavichord;" but soon returning to his own natural good taste,

he altered it to the form in which it is now engraved. Every period of ten years has some new form or style of melody peculiar to it, but which quickly grows out of fashion. A composer who wishes his works to descend to posterity should avoid these transient peculiarities. Bach, however, did not escape this rock in his early years. His first compositions for the organ, as well as his two-part Inventions in their original form, are full of flourishes agreeably to the taste of that day. His organ pieces have remained as they were, but his Inventions have been much improved. The public will soon have an opportunity of comparing the ancient with the later form, as the publishers have formed the praiseworthy resolution of suppressing the first edition, and delivering to subscribers an improved one in its stead. The methods of improvement hitherto spoken of extend, however, merely to the outward form; for instance, to the redundant or unsufficient expression of an entire thought. But Bach frequently employed means to perfect his works so nice and refined as almost to defy explanation. Unity of style and character are often marred by the admission of one single note which, though it could not possibly be objected to by the most rigid musical grammarian, would yet offend the nice perception of the connoisseur. The most commonplace passages may frequently become the most elegant by the substitution, addition or subtraction of a single note. But such cases can only be decided by the purest feeling and most finished and experienced taste; and these qualities Bach possessed in an eminent degree; and he gradually so improved both, that no single idea was tolerable to him which, in all its points and bearings, did not agree and harmonize with the rest. His later works, therefore, are as if all cast in one mould; so smooth, even and harmonious is the rich stream of the most diversified ideas artfully blended together. This is a pinnacle of perfection in the art, which none has ever so effectually attained as John Sebastian Bach.

(Conclusion next week.)

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

Signor Masoni.

FROM THE PRIVATE PAPERS OF THE LATE MR. BROWN.

(A FANTASY PIECE)

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III.

Upon reflection I clearly saw that the cause of Masoni's unhappiness lay in the false step of concealing his origin. Had he come into society as a rescued slave, this fact alone would have won him notice, and his noble and beautiful mind and character, leaving out of view his great artistic powers, would have done the rest in securing for him all of happiness that falls usually to the lot of man. I had afterwards a long and serious conversation with him upon the subject, and advised him to let his history be made known, and thus drive the "devil," as he expressed it, from his imagination. For him, however, this was a step of almost unconquerable difficulty. The trace of African blood in his veins, which, however, it was utterly impossible for the most experienced overseer or negro-trader to detect, had during the years that he had passed on equal terms with the students at Leipzig, and other places, become a bugbear of portentous size. As the idea became familiarized to his mind, it lost in some degree its terrors, and I think success would have crowned my efforts, had not opposing circumstances intervened. But I must give the outline of Masoni's story. He was born on the plantation where I had first seen him—was the pet plaything in the family until he was five or six years old—was then turned out among the other children until he had grown up a pretty boy, when he came again into the house for a few years, and was

thence transferred to the stables. His master always treated him kindly, and he still cherished some degree of affectionate remembrance of him. His turn for music was remarked while he was still very young, and time and opportunity were given him to practice the fiddle with superannuated old Pompey, and to fit himself to succeed him as plantation fiddler—then the height of his ambition—when the old man should "hang up the fiddle and the bow," which event happened when Masoni was still but a boy. Pompey's course of instruction was hardly one which would be admitted into an European conservatory;—hence the great excellence the pupil attained was owing to a never-tiring industry and perseverance, in seeking the means of expressing upon his instrument the tones which, sleeping or waking, were always ringing in his inward ear. No one—and he a slave—could be more happily situated than he; yet something within refused to be contented with his lot, and ideas of freedom, vague and uncertain—whence they came, how begotten, he knew not—began to mingle in his dreams and musings, and make him miserable. Upon such topics he could not speak, but his thoughts and feelings began gradually to find utterance in strange tones and peculiar effects of his instrument. The discovery of his power over those who heard him play, drew him on to new efforts. He gave himself so entirely to this one object of his existence, as to bring him into difficulty with his master.

And for a time his fiddle was taken away.—"What I suffered then! what I suffered then!" exclaimed he; "I believe no tophet could be fuller of torment." The loss of his instrument affected his health seriously, and at last his good-natured master, partly on his own account, partly for the sake of the other slaves, whom he would not deprive of this small enjoyment, ordered it to be returned, cautioning him to beware how he allowed it to spoil him for his daily tasks.

Mr. Mason was a good-natured, easy man, proud of his descent, proud of his fine plantation, of his horses, his dogs, his social position, and of his well-fed, contented slaves, because nature, beyond a very handsome personal appearance in his youth and early manhood, had given him nothing else to be proud of. His wife and children were all, like him, very moderately endowed with mental advantages—good, respectable, fashionable people—save the second daughter, Miss Sarah. Masoni, speaking both from recollection and from the representations of Father Gutmann, pictured her as possessing all the intellectual gifts denied to the rest of the family, and as being proud, headstrong, and domineering in like proportion. While still a little girl of some ten or twelve years, she was more feared and disliked by the people, than all the rest together. It is one of the great disadvantages of plantation life, that unless the mother is able to understand, appreciate and guide the development of a rich and productive intellect, it is in a great measure left to its own resources, and being surrounded by so many unfavorable influences, the chances are many to one that the results will be in a high degree unfavorable. Miss Sarah was a source of infinite perplexity to both father and mother. She tyrannized over them, and over her brothers and sisters—how much more, then, over the poor people of the plantation. Her teachers could do nothing with her, and yet she by the mere force of her

talents far outstripped the other children in her acquirements. She had one passion—Music. Tired of the shallowness and pretensions of the successive teachers she had had, and whom she had one after the other fairly driven from the place, the winter when I was at the Christmas festival before described, she was spending in Philadelphia, that she might at length find some one able to afford her such instruction as she felt she needed. There she found Father Gutmann. He saw at once her capacities, and won her respect by introducing her immediately to the best piano-forte music of his "Fatherland." She soon found in him a man who was disposed to treat her airs and domineering tone with a cool contempt, which at the same time incensed and attracted her. She found it was a matter of entire indifference to him whether a girl of fifteen was disposed to continue her lessons or not, and after one scene, in consequence of which she was forced to humble herself to him, or lose the delights of the new world into which he had brought her, she treated him with perfect respect. When Spring came, she would take no denial from her father or from Gutmann—he *should* go with her to Virginia, and continue his instructions until the usual period when the family left home for the summer tour. Thus it came that Father Gutmann became acquainted with Masoni, and discovered his genius.

"My highest delight," said Masoni, "at that time, was to leave the stables after my work was done, and listen under the window to the (to me) wonderful music of the piano-forte and Father Gutmann's violin. The new world was thus opened to me also, and when I had a leisure moment for my own practice, oh how I labored to reproduce the musical thoughts I had heard! The old man took no notice of me, as I then supposed, nor could I in my position as slave presume to speak with him upon a subject which filled my thoughts night and day. He did, however, observe me, and as it afterwards proved, most carefully, and would gladly have set me free, had it been by any possible means in his power. The time came for Gutmann to depart. He had made himself respected and liked by every member of the family, who could not in their hearts thank him enough for his restraining influence upon the daughter and sister, whom they could not comprehend, and who lorded it so haughtily over them all. His request therefore, that Dick might drive him to the stage office was at once allowed, and to my joy I first found myself alone and in a position to speak with the good old man. For some time little was said as we drove along. But just before reaching the office he began:—

"So, Dick, you are the musician there, it seems."

"Yes, massa."

"And you are quite a famous player, they say."

"Oh! massa."

"Dick, I have heard more of your music than you think. If you were only free, I would make a man of you. Let's see: I say, Dick," and here he fixed his eyes full upon mine," if—if you should ever find your way to Philadelphia, go to the first shop in whose windows you should see a collection of musical instruments, present this letter, which is directed to me, and you will hear where I am. Mind, I say nothing of running away, and following the North star into Pennsylvania; I only tell you that should you happen to be in Philadelphia, don't forget, I'll make a man of you. Let no

living soul see the letter, except the man in the music store, or it may be the worse for you and for me." Nothing farther was said, and Father Gutmann bade me good bye in the presence of the stage-office people as unconcernedly as if he had never seen me before.

I had been so happy in the possession of my fiddle again, as to be quite content with my lot, and this encounter with Miss Sarah's music-teacher, strange as it was to me, was soon almost forgotten. But after the return of the family from their tour, things were changed. Miss Sarah was prouder, haughtier, less amiable, if that was possible, than ever. The monetary crisis of 1837 in the commercial world had at length reached in its influence many of the Virginia planters; my master among the rest. Cabin after cabin began to lose a tenant, sold away. My situation became less easy. My leisure hours became fewer. The order to stop that eternal fiddling was issued. And so the idea of being "made a man of" and of seeking out Father Gutmann, became more and more prominent in my mind. Still this idea would probably have led to nothing, had not an accident happened to Miss Sarah's horse, for which I was in truth not to blame, but for which, with eyes flashing and face flushed with rage, she demanded that I should be flogged. There could be no peace in the house until this was done, and so for the first time since I was a small child, I was stripped, tied up and flogged. Yes," continued Masoni after a pause, in a husky voice, "flogged until the blood ran in streams. The scars are there now, and" with his eyes gleaming with a fierceness which I had never seen in them before, he added, "I would give my life willingly for revenge!" "According to the reckoning of old mammy,—of my own mother I know nothing—I was then about nineteen years, and felt as much like a man as a slave can; and the injustice done me at the instance of that young girl quite changed my nature. I began to brood over the words of Father Gutmann, and at last—I *did* run away! Night after night as so many others have done, I followed the North star, and was so fortunate as to reach Pennsylvania in safety. But I was far from Philadelphia. Luckily I was so white as to avoid suspicion, and as I had succeeded in retaining my old instrument, I fiddled my way to the great city. My letter was safe, and I presented it at several shops where musical instruments were displayed, and at last found one where the address was known. Father Gutmann was in New York!

"I fiddled my way to New York, and after repeated efforts, learned in the same manner that the old musician was somewhere near Boston. I fiddled my way to Boston, but there I sought him in vain. He was not known there."

In Boston he made his case known to some of the anti-slavery people, who procured a place for him in a stable at the North End, the owner of which was a kind-hearted man and gave him time to earn many a quarter of a dollar as the musician of the poorer people. It was in the winter of 1840-41 that a distinguished German violinist came to Boston and announced a series of concerts, (I think this must have been Herwig.) Masoni had been long enough in the free states to feel in some degree a full man, and to find that no one suspected his faint trace of African blood. He heard the new artist spoken of

by his master's customers, and an irresistible longing seized him to hear him play. With a trembling heart he asked permission to attend the concert. The request was received with a laugh, but granted. It was interesting to hear him describe the feelings with which he joined the crowd at the door of the Melodeon, and by slow degrees made his way to the ticket box, half afraid, notwithstanding that he was well, nay, handsomely dressed, and looked quite the gentleman, of a repulse, with the rough question, "What the nigger was there for?" But no, as he laid down his dollar a ticket was handed him, and he passed in, taking a programme at the door, which he only knew was right end up by noticing that other people had the large letters at the top.

"The happiness and misery of that evening are not to be described—happiness at hearing the real powers of the violin, and seeing what it was to be "made a man of"—misery at the idea of having lost Father Gutmann forever. On the whole, however, I was enchanted. The vocal pieces, indeed every thing but the tones of the master fell upon deaf ears—for *them* I was all ear. I trembled, laughed, cried, and the people near me in my distant corner looked upon me doubtless as a crazy man or a fool. And now my only thought was of the old music teacher; where to seek him; how to find him; I repeated my visits to every music store in the city—the same old answer—the name upon that letter, now becoming well worn, though kept as my greatest treasure, was unknown to them.

I heard that the last concert of the artist was announced. I could not withstand the temptation, and went; but not a note of the music did I really hear; violin, voices, pianoforte appealed to senses too much preoccupied, for as I cast my eyes upon the audience below, from my seat at the end of the gallery, they fell upon the serene features of Father Gutmann, who sat in a chair directly in front of the stage. Heart in mouth, every nerve quivering, the last note had hardly ceased to sound, when I hastened down, pushed my way through the retiring audience, regardless of the black looks of the people whom I crowded anything but gently, and reached the space in front of the stage only to see the good old man pass the door of the private room, whither the virtuoso and his countryman had retired. For a moment I hesitated. But I could not lose him now—it would kill me. I rushed after him, he was talking with the great man in German, but turned at the noise I made in entering, and recognized me at once.

"Oh Massa Gutmann! Massa Gutmann!" was all I could say. He laid his hand so gently and kindly upon my head. "So Dick, my boy, you are here at last. You want to be made a man of, then?"

"Oh, Massa Gutmann!"

"Well, Dick, tell where you are to be found. I will see you to-morrow."

I told him.

"Go home now, I wish to talk with this gentleman. I will certainly see you to-morrow."

"Do you think, Brown, that I slept that night?"

The next day the North End stable keeper lost his musical servant. Mr. Gutmann took him to the small country town where he was then living, placed him under the care of the clergyman of the village, by whom he was instructed, and

whom he repaid by his labor as boy and man of all work. Mr. Bigelow's family was small, consisting entirely of women, except the head, and as is, or was, common with New England country clergymen, no distinction of rank between master and servant was made, and Dick's great industry and engaging qualities soon made him more like a son than a servant.

After my return to America I sought out Mr. Bigelow, and had a long conversation with him in relation to his former pupil.

Father Gutmann had confided to him the history of the young man, but, though at that time the notorious fugitive slave bill had not been passed, it was judged the safer course to keep that history secret. The name Masoni grew naturally out of Gutmann's German pronunciation of Mason. Mr. B. described Dick's progress in learning as the greatest phenomenon he had met during a long life, in which since his academy days he had seldom if ever been without pupils. It was but natural that such rich soil so long fallow should produce abundantly. For three years (the happiest of my life! said Masoni), he had his daily lesson in literature from Mr. Bigelow or his daughters, in the German language and in music from his protector. And then when Father Gutmann felt that his pupil had reached the limits of his powers of instruction, he took him from the quiet routine of his New England village life, brought him to Paris for a few months to give him rest and relaxation, to show him somewhat of the great world's life, and to lay a good foundation for the study of the French language. Thence they came to Leipzig, to Mendelssohn, as before recorded.

"But why was your history still kept a secret?"

"I don't know whether Father Gutmann had any special reason for it. In fact the matter had rather passed from our memories, so occupied were we both with other absorbing topics of thought. It may be that the old gentleman, who hated the system of slavery beyond description, had some vague idea of proving through me, that, had we the same advantages as our masters, we should not fall behind them in other accomplishments, and only in case I took the high position he hoped, did he intend to lay bare the secret. But his plans now lie buried with the old man in the *Gottesacker* at Leipzig. While he lived the evil spirit kept at bay, but his death changed everything to me. You cannot conceive what it is for one, whose whole life has been spent either in the condition of a slave or under the care of such a parent or protector as I had, to be thrown at once upon himself and his own resources. My grief at my loss had hardly in some degree subsided, when the feeling that I am but a runaway slave began to gain possession of me. I cannot conquer the weakness. I want some one to lean upon; oh, if I could be always with you!"

"You would find me but a poor support!" said I. "I am alone in the world, and this evil in my lungs is already warning me to look forward with calmness and resignation to the day when I shall lie down, I hope to pleasant dreams, with the rest of the Browns, in the little churchyard at Hildale. A poor support I! But you must not give way thus. Get Satan behind thee—get out of your false position, and you will find no need of support."

"Perhaps!"

After some minutes' silence he continued: "To

confess the truth, I have been growing better, since we parted last Spring. Whenever the demon gets possession of me, the smart of that flogging seems to return, and a terrible desire for revenge is strengthening itself gradually. Every time the idea that a great gulf does in fact separate me from those with whom I associate, though they know nothing of it, comes up, this craving for revenge is sure to accompany it. I have in fact been brooding over this thought for many weeks past, and your presence is a blessing from heaven, as it relieves me from that idle torment. That I have labored hard to improve myself you know—you see the fruits of these labors—and yet the motives to them have been continually becoming weaker. I am a fool, but the knowledge of the fact does not help me."

Under the influence of the foolish idea which had possessed him, Masoni had sunk quite into a state of despondency. There was in him a constitutional want of energy; or rather, a tendency when the critical moment came, to fail, through a latent suspicion of his own powers, a suspicion which only at such moments exerted any actual influence. He could push through any and all difficulties in search of the golden apple, but when it hung directly over his head he hesitated to stretch forth his hand to pluck it, from fear that it was beyond his reach. I have known such men in literary walks; conscious of their own powers, yet gaining no credit for them, because they needed the recognition of them to give the strength to prove their existence. Like Masoni, they need some one to lean upon, some one to encourage them. Are they not the Churchills of Longfellow's recent tale? Masoni's affection for Father Gutmann had made him supernaturally strong and enabled him to press onward with a steadiness and perseverance, which neither ambition nor his love of music might have given him. Just now some new motive was necessary to elevate him from the state into which he had sunk, and push him onward in his career.

That motive came.

[To be continued.]

#### The Opera in New York.

In the *Tribune* of the 5th inst. there is a long and interesting article from the pen of W. H. FRY apropos of the close of the season at the Academy. He reviews the whole history of the attempts to establish Italian Opera in New-York, points out the causes of their failure, and hints at sounder and more practicable methods, in a style and with a force of argument, which certainly claim the thoughtful consideration of all interested in the great lyric problem for our country. Its great length forbids our copying entire, but we commence making extracts of the more important parts. And we are moved to this the more, that we copied not long since an article from the *Courier and Enquirer* from the opposite point of view from the present writer, who advocates the democratic system of low prices, in opera as in all things.

The following is matter of history and is interesting and instructive enough to stand on record in a Journal of Music.

The attempts to establish an Italian Opera as one of the public amusements in New-York have been numerous, from the first one in the year 1825 to the present time. In that year and the one following, the company of Garcia, of which his daughter, the Malibran, was prima donna, gave 79 representations twice and thrice a week at the Park and Bowery Theatres at the following

prices of admission: Boxes, \$2; pit, \$1; Gallery, 25 cents. The total receipts were \$56,685. The largest nightly receipt was 1,962; the smallest \$250; the average, \$717. In those days the public had the good taste not to require a new opera every three nights; for during that season *Il Barbiere* was performed twenty-three times; *Tancred*, fourteen; *Otello*, nine; *Don Giovanni*, ten, and other operas four or five times each. The next attempt, we believe, was that made in 1832 by Montressor's Company at the Richmond Hill Theatre. In that season of 35 nights the receipts were \$25,603; an average of \$731 a-night. Next the Italian Opera House at Church and Leonard streets was built, and during its first season of six months in 1833-'34 under Rivafinoli's management the receipts averaged \$750 a-night. During its second season of five months, in 1834-'35 under Porto and Sacchi's management, the receipts averaged \$450 a-night. The project of maintaining this as an Italian Opera House was then abandoned; it was rented for theatrical purposes, and in 1841 was destroyed by fire.

Signor Palmo next erected an Italian Opera-House in Chambers street, which opened in 1843-'4, with a season of twenty-seven nights, the gross receipts of which were \$13,525—an average of \$501 a-night. During the first twelve nights of the next season at the same house the receipts averaged \$432, and during the season of 1845-'6 about \$500. Palmo's Opera-House being voted too small and too far down town for the fashionables, was then abandoned, and became some years later what it now is—Burton's Theatre. A hundred and fifty gentlemen next subscribed to support the Italian Opera for seventy-five nights a year during five years. Upon the strength of this subscription Messrs. Foster, Morgan and Colles built a very elegant Opera-House in Astor place, near Broadway. This house had accommodations for nearly 1,500 persons seated, viz: in the parquet 308, in two stage-boxes 28, in the second-tier private and open boxes 246, and in the third tier or amphitheatre 600. The five seasons, commencing with the Winter 1847-'8 and ending with the Winter 1851-'52, were given, and the receipts on the average were about \$850 a-night.

These were all for what may be termed the legitimate attempts to establish Italian Opera as one of the institutions of New-York from 1825 to 1854; beside these there were several chance seasons by Albini, Sontag, and the Havana Company and others, who had no interest in establishing the Opera in New-York, but calculated on making a large sum in a short time and carrying it out of the country to be spent. The prices of the above regular or legitimate seasons were various, ranging from \$2 to \$1, the last sum being the lowest ever charged to the best places. Most of these seasons ended disastrously the expenses exceeding the receipts. When the five years' subscription for the support of the Astor-place Opera House expired that building was converted to its present use—a library. It was then proposed to build an opera-house capable of accommodating three times as numerous an audience, in order to make the experiment of a cheap Opera. In favor of building such an opera-house many arguments were presented, the chief of which was that if the Opera could at all be established here as a permanent institution it must be democratic, that is drawing its support from many people, and not from a limited number of private-box holders; accordingly a house of great size was required by which numbers could be accommodated at prices of admission within the means of all. Some years before application had been made to the Legislature for an act of incorporation for this object which had been refused: it was now renewed and obtained.

The stockholders, too, supposed the Academy of Music was to be a democratic theatre, "to seat comfortably from four to five thousand persons," as appears from their articles of association.

So far for the present. We shall continue these extracts next week.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JAN. 12, 1856.

## Truth before Effect, or "Lind versus Italy."

We published a short time ago a private letter of Mme. JENNY LIND GOEDSCHMIDT, containing some very admirable advice to a young American lady going abroad to learn to sing; and exhorting her, among other things, to learn music, as well as singing, to become familiar with great music of great authors (that is the amount of it, not as she expressed it), and closing with these words:

What I therefore wish most earnestly to impress upon Miss —'s mind is, that she should try to combine Italian song and German music, the one being as necessary as the other; that she should try to avoid false pathos, as the same law exists, to its fullest extent, in Art as in life; that she be true to herself, try to find out the beauty of truth, as well in the simplest song as in the most difficult aria; and the great secret will be hers—the most powerful protector against envy and malice will be on her side."

One would think there could be no mistaking the pure and simple purport of these words, and no gainsaying their great truth and wisdom. Yet the London *Musical World*, in copying the letter from our columns, fancying it necessary to find deep and hidden allusions in the most plain and direct speech, appends the following exquisite stupidity—if it be not malignity:

Without pretending to know what the accomplished artist intends to convey by "the most powerful protector against envy and malice," (which fairly eludes our closest investigation) we must own that we agree with much that she advances. True, a staunch admirer of Sig. Verdi might point to the quasi failure of Sig. Verdi's opera *I Masnadieri* (*The Freebooters*), at Her Majesty's Theatre, in 1847, in which Mme. Jenny Lind played the principal character; but that would be rather wicked than logical, and savor not a little of the "envy and malice" against which the renowned cantatrice so mysteriously inveighs in her letter to the young lady.

Whereat some good soul of a subscriber, in the next number of the *World*, replies from a simple common-sense point of view, and with fatherly patience enlightens the editorial darkness. There is something so genuine in the feeling of this reply, that we think it worth preserving:

SIR.—The perusal of the artistic and truthful letter of the renowned soprano, which appears in your current number, has afforded me so much gratification, that I trust you will pardon my anxiety to rush in at the end as interpreter of her concluding phrase "which" (says your Journal) "fairly eludes our closest investigation."

The remark of the writer is that the most powerful protector against envy and malice will be on the side of the young lady on whose behalf she is advising, if he pursues a given course, the essence of which is to find out the beauty of truth." Now this remark strikes me as being in itself so beautifully just and true, that I would fain see its illustrious originator honored by a Professorship at Oxford or Cambridge, either in music, morals, or philosophy, or all three. By the sweet song-bird needs no such elevating process—stately gods and goddesses must be placed on columns reared by men of earth; but gifts created in heaven can soar aloft on ether's wing, and only return to earth at intervals to bless it with dreams of the spirit-land.

I must however, come to a matter-of-fact statement why I appreciate the remark; and it is this. If a heaven-born gift be possessed (say, by the lady advised), and the possessor be true to herself, avoiding the exaggerated style against which her kind friend so wisely counsels her, seeking (to re-quote the words) "to find out the beauty of truth, as well in the simplest song, as in the most difficult aria," she will assuredly fill all hearts, worthy to be called human, with so much of loving admiration, as to leave no place for the rank roots of envy. Can we deem it possible that the all-beneficent Creator hath so fashioned even the least of His gifts, that it could excite

so foul a passion? Much less, then, can we suppose such a thing of the angelic gift of song! I, for one, feel assured that if an artist is not more loved than envied, he or she has something yet to learn, or else much to unlearn.

It is this view of the case which so greatly charms me, and makes the entire letter such an enjoyable one as to render me anxious that none of its beauties should be lost upon either the sex addressed, or the sex that must ever rejoice to admit its inferiority, even with the pen, when a really gifted woman employs it as the winged messenger of her soul's pure thoughts.

Though in haste, believe me to remain, dear sir.  
Yours very faithfully,  
4th Dec., 1855.

CHORALE.

## C O N C E R T S .

FOURTH ORCHESTRAL CONCERT.—A barometrical sign has become almost as much a matter of course at the head of a concert notice, as the metronome mark at the beginning of a piece of music. Saturday night was the snow-storm of a score or two of years; yet near a thousand people braved its fury and forgot it in the Music Hall. The concert appeared to give pretty general pleasure, although the programme was decidedly inferior to either of the preceding, and below the standard of this class of concerts for years past. The Symphony in F, by GOUVY, we liked so much, that we could like to hear it again; but not in the place of the great Symphony which one always expects to form the *pièce de résistance* in such a series as this; not at the expense of one sixth of our whole year's symphony supplies. It is a light, euphonious, pleasing composition; shows a decided talent for instrumentation, using all the modern resources of the orchestra, and using them (the brass especially) so that they enrich without offending. It shows also close familiarity—close, not intimate—familiarity with form, method, structure, and not with the spirit—with the great masters of the Symphony. Here you have preparations like Beethoven, but no Beethoven result, no considerable result at all follows. Thus in the Scherzo, the most striking of the movements, really clever in its first part, the sinking upon a mysterious prolonged monotone would fain raise expectation like the *Leonora* overture, but the episode (Trio) that ensues is a sentimental, sweetish sort of melody (duet of horns), which would not seem much out of place in some *Anna Bolena* or *Lucia* scena. Here again, in the Larghetto, he floats, like so many young composers, in something like a Mendelssohnian atmosphere; but the resemblance is superficial; yet there is sweetness, tenderness and grace in it. German in his studies, M. Gouvy seems entirely French in character, in spirit. Many times, in the first movement especially, you may fancy you are listening to an overture of Auber or of Adam. Familiar as he is with classic form, he does not appear master of it; there is not real logical development of musical thought; things do not follow as by innate necessity from germs of thought once started; growth, proportion, climax, (by which every work of a great creative mind impresses and commands you, whether you understand it quite or not, as surely as a great personal presence)—these are not. And this simply from the lack of genius, from the poverty of pregnant ideas, musical ideas. Instead of this you have a striving after ideas; how remarkable this in the very first theme of the Allegro; the would-be melody lifts and lifts itself a little, and each time falls back, like the first efforts of a half-fledged

bird to fly; it seems to promise well; seems as if out of this yearning would be born something memorable; as if invention were indeed about to soar; but it does not; you lose all interest in the theme started, think little of it in what follows, and please yourself as you can while he goes on "making music."

This is no criticism *ex cathedrâ*; we would not presume so far as that; but such were the impressions which we could not help bringing away from this new Symphony, heard after those masterworks of genius with which, thanks to our orchestras for years past, we have been made familiar. The audience, too, made spontaneously the same comparison, for nothing all that evening was devoured with such an appetite and so spontaneously applauded as the next orchestral piece, the charming and poetically light *Allegro* from the eighth Symphony of BEETHOVEN.—Both pieces were in the main finely played. Between them was the famous *Aria* from GLUCK'S "Orpheus": *Che farà senza Euridice*, sung by Miss ADELAIDE PHILLIPS. Her rich tones and artistic style could not but give pleasure in such noble melody; yet we regretted that she still, as on a former occasion, marred the pure perfection of the song by ornaments after the modern Italian fashion, not profiting by the instructions of Gluck himself with reference to this very piece, which were cited in this Journal some weeks since. We do not, however, blame the singer. We can suppose she only knows the song as written out for her and taught her by her Italian teacher (Garcia?) abroad. We blame the modern school, which teaches each young singer to consult *effect* more than the truth of Art. As Gluck wrote it, there is not the slightest ornament or cadenza either in recitative or air. Moreover the time was taken somewhat too slow in general, and with arbitrary variations, rather than those indicated by the composer. It is a pleasing and a striking fact with regard to Miss PHILLIPS, that in precisely the music, which has not been taught to her, in the songs of the "Messiah" (which oratorio, we are told, she never in her life had heard), music which she sings directly from the notes, *simply*, as it is written, she has sung the best. Here she respected the composer, respected the truth of Art, and did not make the music a mere vehicle of the modern singer's little outfit of *effects*. We hope Miss Phillips will study and produce more songs of this kind, and produce them simply, loyally, as she has done the songs of Handel.

Part Second opened with the overture to *Semiramide*, one of ROSSINI's best, and always popular; partly on account of the beautiful horn quartet, which was finely played, except perhaps a little too *staccato*; and partly for its fascinating little melody, its voluptuous coloring and the Rossini characteristics generally. It was very effectively and nicely played, (except a slip in one very simple horn passage,) and barely escaped an encore.—The remainder was rather of the nature of ordinary miscellaneous "star" concerts.—There was an unfortunate sweetish sameness, and hence a tediousness in the three last pieces. Between the somewhat hackneyed *O mio Fernando* of DONIZETTI, (which Miss Phillips sang admirably in the slow movement, executing well also, if not in her best style, the brilliant finale added to it, it is said, by BOTESSINI,—though a more soprano pitch would seem essential

to the brightness of such a piece of vocal fireworks)—and the orchestrally arranged DONIZETTI finale to *Lucia*, came a Violin Concerto by SPOHR, also *in modo di scena cantante*, that is to say, more in the singing operatic than the instrumental spirit, monotonous with “linked sweetness long drawn out,” like most we ever heard of Spohr. Yet an excellent composition in its way, could it have come in stronger contrast with things before and after. It is indeed full of melody. Mr. CARL GARTNER played it smoothly and expressively, showing a great mastery of the fine points of execution.

OTTO DRESEL'S FIRST SOIREE.—The third season (we had none last winter) of these exquisitely choice entertainments was opened on Wednesday evening,—an unfortunate time for not a few of the subscribers, whom previous engagements kept away. Yet there was a fine audience, and a more delighted one seldom sat together through so much. The programme was long, but no one felt its length; there was so much *piquant* individuality and novelty (to most of us) in the selections, so much variety as well as solid wealth, that new refreshment still anticipated fatigue. Such a programme may be preserved as a model in its way:

PART I.

1. First Movement from the Concerto for two Pianos, in C, with Quartet Accompagnement.....J. S. Bach.
2. Aria, with Violoncello,.....J. S. Bach.
3. Piano Solos: a. Rondo, op. 16.....Chorin.
- b. Fugghetta.....R. Schumann.
- c. Gigue.....Mozart.

PART II.

5. Sonata for Piano: “Les Adieux, l'Absence, et le Retour,”.....Beethoven.
6. Aria: “Dove sono,” from *Le Nozze de Figaro*,.....Mozart.
7. Romance for Piano, with Quintet Accompagnement.
8. Quintet for Piano, violin, viola, and violoncello,.....R. Schumann.

*Allegro brillante—Tempo di Marcia funebre—Molto animato—Finale.*

For unavoidable reasons the Sonata by MENDELSSOHN was played first; a singularly beautiful composition, full of verve and impetus, pervaded by a delicate and subtle fire from beginning to end, and very difficult. It was admirably played by Messrs. DRESEL and WULF FRIES. The movement from the concerto by BACH, for two pianos, had all the cheerful, wholesome life and strength and sunshine of the profound, yet ever childlike master;—buoyant, sparkling with a myriad happy wavelets in incessant motion, never resting, never troubled, like the sunny bosom of the broad sea. Such a piece of music you do not remember consecutively, but as a continuous happy state, a present in which past and future are absorbed. It was played with consummate neatness and truth of accent by both artists (Messrs. DRESEL and TRENKLE.)

The three little piano solos, played to perfection by Mr. Dresel, were finely contrasted, and each original and charming in its way. The Rondo of CHOPIN, however, is not a little piece, but a long and difficult bravura handling of an arch and piquant little theme, without the inconsequence or emptiness of most bravura pieces. The Fugghetta by SCHUMANN, one of his early little inspirations, has a short march-like rhythm, subdued and mysterious in its tone, very clear and taking its form. The *Gigue* by MOZART is a fascinating, merry thing, much in the manner of old Bach's happy humors.

Mr. Dresel deserves thanks if only for introducing to his audience another Sonata of BEETHOVEN.

VEN. The titles of the movements: “Parting, Absence and Return,” indicate its sentiment. But there is no common-place and feeble pathos about it. It is the deep, poetic, delicate passion of a Beethoven that inspires its sadness and its uncontrollable ecstasy. It is a perfect love poem from beginning to end, admitting of no break between the parts, music in which you forget the player (if he plays it truly, as Mr. Dresel did,) and are transported by the exquisitely imaginative dream of passion. It has not the breadth and grandeur of many of Beethoven's works, but reveals no less a genuine side of him, and to those who know it well has always been one of the most interesting, though perhaps not one of the most readily appreciated by listeners for the first time. It is extremely difficult, played so very fast as it must be in the Allegro and Finale; for Beethoven wrote musical ideas, and not piano passages.

The Romance by CHOPIN was heavenly; the melody, of his most subtle, delicate, and dreamy, floated on the air so purely, and stole so sweetly on the listening soul, that one scarce thought of the cunning, sympathetic fingers that discoursed it; and against that soft, misty background of the quartet of muted strings, the effect was perfect. Mr. Dresel is one of the few and therefore best pianists, who makes you hear the music, not himself. In this piece, as well as the Bach Concerto, he was finely accompanied by the MENDELSSOHN QUINTET CLUB; also in the closing piece, that grand and overwhelming Quintet by Schumann, which produced so great an impression when played two or three times here a few years since, and a much deeper now. Whatever may be thought of Schumann's later works, there is no questioning the originality, the imaginative power and beauty, of this work. The *marcia funebre* is profoundly touching.

The vocal selections, sweetly sung' by Mrs. WENTWORTH, who did not seem, however, in her best voice, were very choice. That gleamingly pious aria by Bach, to words (in the German) as quaint as some of the old Methodist hymns, the burden being, “My Jesus is here!” sounds as fresh and new as any melody we know. The air from *Figaro* was perhaps better sung, bating the long recitative, in which the singer seemed not quite to trust herself; and the (anonymous) lullaby to TENNYSON's words: “Soft and Low, Wind of the Western Sea,” was found to be a little gem in its way, words, melody, and accompaniment being most aptly wedded.

■■■ APOLOGY.—Owing to a multitude of accidents, failure of gas, sickness of printer, &c., it has been impossible to get this paper out in season for the usual mails.

Musical Chit-Chat.

The fifth Orchestral Concert, next week, offers a richer programme than the last—indeed a very attractive one. The old C minor Symphony, the first love of Boston, will be hailed with joy by hundreds. The series will close with festival commemorations of great composers, which will pique public interest not a little. We suggested in our last the propriety of making the sixth concert a commemoration of MOZART, the one hundredth anniversary of whose birthday occurs on the 27th inst. But the regular evening of the concert comes on Saturday,

February 2d; and February 3d is the anniversary of MENDELSSOHN's birth. The directors therefore have decided to unite the two occasions in one on Saturday, February 2d, and make the concert commemorative of those two great masters, the selections to be taken purely from their works: such as the “Jupiter” symphony, *Zauberflöte* overture, &c., of the one; the Piano (with orchestra) Capriccio, Overtures, &c., &c., of the other. A seventh extra Concert will be given on the evening of Saturday, March 2d, which will be a grand BEETHOVEN FESTIVAL, for the inauguration of the Statue in the Music Hall, when the “Choral Symphony,” the Choral Fantasia (for piano, to be played by the donor of the statue), will be given with grand orchestra, a select chorus, and distinguished vocal aid, besides other instrumental and vocal masterpieces of the great man. A poetic prologue, too, has been prepared by one who is both artist and poet, and will be recited on the inspiring occasion.

The announcement of nine nights of ITALIAN OPERA at the Boston Theatre, commencing on the 21st, is at length formally before us. The prospectus is a tempting one; the singers the same of whom we have heard so much at the Academy in New York, a brilliant galaxy of names, headed by the incomparable LAGRANGE, and including our own ELISE HENSLER, who comes to us in opera for the first time, three good contralti, of whom NANTIER-DIDIEE is new to us and famous; two principal tenors, BRIGNOLI and SALVIANI—the latter new to us, and one of the old Rossini school of tenors—besides several secondary tenors; and such well known and esteemed baritones and basses as MORELLI, AMODIO, ROVERE (the comic), and GASPARONI. Our handsome “Don Quixote of the Opera” comes as Conductor again. The list of the pieces to be produced, though to the cultivated music-lover it offers very little novelty, is yet one to prove very popular, and includes three well-known operas of Bellini, two of Donizetti, the *Trovatore* of Verdi, the *Semiramide* of Rossini, the *Don Juan* of Mozart, and for one grand novelty the *Prophète* of Meyerbeer. Why not give us also, with such means, the ever-fascinating, the immortal “Barber?” There are to be Saturday afternoon performances; is not the mere tradition of that GRISI and MARIO afternoon in *Il Barbiere* enough to create a demand for it? The prices, though not down to the popular standard, are yet more reasonable than they have usually been, considering how costly and how strong the troupe.

The next conductor of the London Philharmonic Concerts, it is said, will be Mr. WILLIAM STERNDALE BENNETT, the composer of the *Naiades* overture and many classical works in quite a Mendelssohnian vein....JULLIEN is still giving in London his “Mozart nights” and his “Beethoven” and “Mendelssohn” nights, each night winding up with his stupendous Sebastopol quadrille. Mme. GASSIER is his singer....MERCADANTE, the veteran composer, has entered into a contract with the Impresario of the San Carlo, at Naples, to write a new opera for the Carnival season of 1856-7.

The Opera season at the Academy wound up last week with *Don Giovanni*. Mme. LAGRANGE as Donna Anna, Mlle. NANTIER-DIDIEE as Zerlina, ELISE HENSLER as Donna Elvira, MORELLI, the Don, ROVERE, Leporello, SALVIANI, Ottavio. We shall soon have it here.

Mr. MORGAN, the distinguished organist, has been giving in New York an evening of “Piano-Forte Recitals,” as he calls it, in which he played Sonatas of Beethoven, preludes and fugues of Bach and Handel and Mendelssohn, pieces by Chopin, &c. We hear nothing more of those Organ Soirées which he proposed giving in Boston....Mr. GUSTAV SATTER,

the pianist, assisted by Mr. and Mrs. LEACH, vocalists, gave the first of a series of Chamber concerts at the Norfolk House in Roxbury, on Wednesday night. The entertainment, we may presume, was mainly classical, but one of the reports speaks in most glowing terms of the prodigious energy with which the young virtuoso reproduced the *Trovatore* anvils on his grand piano.... In Salem concerts of sacred music are announced by two societies: the Choral Society will repeat Mozart's 12th Mass; the Academy of Music sing to-morrow evening choruses from the "Messiah," "Creation," "Mount of Olives," &c.

The interest of "The Messiah," though it has been given five times within the month past, is not yet exhausted. There seems still an eagerness to sing it and to hear it, and many will hail with pleasure the sudden announcement of still a *sixth* performance in the Music Hall, to-morrow night, in the shape of a "Grand Union Concert." The three societies have taken their turns separately; and now two of them, the MUSICAL EDUCATION and the HANDEL AND HAYDN societies, (the latter volunteering individual aid), will no doubt make a splendid chorus, and with such solo aid as they announce, with Mr. ZERRAHN conducting, a good orchestra, and Mr. MUELLER at the organ, produce it very satisfactorily. The Education Society are entitled to a good night, considering the storm of Christmas. This society inaugurated their new hall (in Mercantile Library Building) last Monday evening, with appropriate music, speeches and other pleasant socialities.... The second Concert of the GERMAN TRIO took place at Chickering's last evening; the classical pieces were Beethoven's "Kreutzer Sonata" (violin and piano), and Trio in C minor, Op. 1. Mrs. J. H. LONG sang, and there were solo fantasias and so forth as before. .... The MENDELSSOHN QUINTETTE CLUB announce some very favorite masterpieces for the next Chamber concert, such as the "Kreutzer Sonata," the E flat Trio of Mozart, &c., &c.

The second Philharmonic Concert in New York takes place this evening. A symphony by GADE will be the main feature; BADIALLI (not gone back to Europe after all!) will sing, and APOTOMMAS, the harpist, and SCHMITZ, the hornist, perform solos.... They seem to be having a rich opera season in New Orleans. The *Huguenots*, Halévy's *Reine de Chypre*, Verdi's *Jerusalem*; *Lucia*, *Norma*, *Le Domino Noir*, &c., have been represented by the excellent French Company there. In the same city M. COLLIGNON, pianist, one of the classical pupils of the French Conservatoire, is giving Chamber Concerts, including Hummel's Septet, quartets of Beethoven, Mozart, &c. Everywhere in the cities of our broad land this kind of music seems to be gathering its circles of admirers.

## Musical Correspondence.

PHILADELPHIA, JAN. 8.—I write more to beg pardon for my long silence than to give you any news in regard to musical matters here. For nearly four weeks I have been invalided, and not only unable to attend any of the concerts that have been given, but even too ill to account for the cessation of my correspondence. However, I am at length able to brave the night air, and shall then resume my series of letters.

I have been to but two concerts since I last wrote you, and they were given so soon after my last letter, that they date too far back to demand a lengthened notice now. One was given by the MUSICAL UNION at the Musical Fund Hall, the other was that at which BADIALLI appeared at Concert Hall. The feature of the first was the *Stabat Mater* of ROSSINI, with full orchestra. The staging being too small to accommodate both chorus and instrumental performers,

the latter were placed upon the floor of the room, in front of the voices; I leave you to imagine the result; the accompaniments were heard to unusual advantage, the voices completely overpowered by the din.

BADIALLI's concert, or more properly Mr. BLACK's second concert, was a very interesting entertainment, owing to the re-appearance of the favorite baritone after a lengthy absence from Philadelphia. He sang with all his ordinary taste, and to my ears his voice sounded as fresh and fine as in the old SONTAG opera times.

To night the Musical Union gives a grand Operatic Concert to inaugurate the new Hall in Market street; a very large room, I hear, seventy feet by one hundred and eighty in length. I have not seen the interior. From the street its appearance is by no means imposing, as it is built of common red brick, and is over a flour-dealer's depot,—not an eligible position for a music-room. Its situation in Market street will prevent it from becoming a fashionable resort, as the "upper ten" could not bring their carriages to the curbs where vegetables and butchers' carts properly belong.

By the newspapers, I see Professor CROUCH has connected himself with Sanford's American Opera House,—a sort of Buckley's Serenaders,—and has written for it a burlesque upon *Norma*, which, it is advertised, he will conduct in person.

The ORATORIO AND MADRIGAL SOCIETY, of which Mr. CROUCH is the musical director, is to organize to-morrow evening.

The HANDEL AND HAYDN Society is in active rehearsal, I am told, under the baton of LEOPOLD MEIGNEN. I do not think the directors have announced a concert yet.

As to the HARMONIA, I have not heard its name breathed since the critics exhausted themselves on Mr. DARLEY'S Oratorio. The society is probably resting on its laurels.

A friend tells me that Mr. MEIGNEN has completed an Oratorio, called "The Deluge," which is to be brought out at an extra concert of the Musical Union, which, I suppose, is anxious to rival the Harmonia in the fostering of American composition. Such a rivalry is honorable to all concerned.

VFRITAS.

## Advertisements.

### ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS.

THE FIFTH  
OF THE SUBSCRIPTION SERIES OF SIX

### GRAND ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

Will be given at the

BOSTON MUSIC HALL,  
On Saturday Evening, Jan. 19th, 1856,

With the assistance of  
MRS. E. A. WENTWORTH and Mr. WULF FRIES.  
Conductor.....CARL ZERRAHN.

### PROGRAMME.

#### Part I.

1. Symphony No. 5, in C minor,.....Beethoven.
2. Aria: "Dove sono" from *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mozart  
Sung by Mrs. WENTWORTH.
3. Overture to *Oberon*,.....Weber.

#### Part II.

1. Andante and Variations, and Finale from the Septet  
in E flat, op. 20,.....Beethoven.
2. Solo for Violoncello: "Souvenirs de Spa."  
Played by WULF FRIES.
3. Song: MRS. WENTWORTH.

4. Notturno, from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Mendelssohn.
5. Overture to *Siege of Corinth*,.....Rossini.

Tickets Fifty Cents each, to be obtained at the usual places. Also, in sets of six, good for any of the remaining concerts, at \$2.50 per set.  
Doors open at 6½. Commence at 7½ o'clock.

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<b>Linda di Chamounix,</b>	<b>Don Giovanni,</b>
<b>Sonnambula,</b>	<b>The Prophet.</b>
<b>La Favorita,</b>	

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